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## IGNORANT SUSPICIONS.

THE common people often make grievous errors in their notions with respect to the motives which animate public men. They generally err both as to the nature and amount of the motive. They are very much disposed to suspect that a direct and large bribe has been the cause of a certain piece of conduct, where any one acquainted with the two parties in the case would know at once that nothing of that kind was in the least likely to have ever been thought of by either. All the French generals in the early years of the Revolution who lost battles, were suspected of having been bribed by the enemy to allow themselves to be beaten. Even in our own day and country, each of the opposing political factions always presumes of each other, that lucre is the predominating motive of their respective opponents. The literary reviews are supposed by many to take douceurs from opulent authors, in consideration of panegyrical criticism: we have seen, in one, a serious notice disclaiming the practice, in reply to an individual who had actually applied to know *how much* was generally expected. We ourselves have more than once had to repel the suspicion that we were hired by the colonial land-companies to advocate emigration. These are all of them most absurd errors—little superior, in fact, to the notions of our ancestors as to magic and witchcraft. Direct bribing is not now among the causes which actuate the conduct of educated men. To suppose that it is, is not only to attribute the wrong motive, but to hide the real one. The conduct of many public men is still very far from being animated by the right motives; but it is of importance that the community should thoroughly see and know by what motives they really are animated. When we see, then, in political personages, conduct which we think bad, we should probably now-a-days be much nearer the mark if we were to inquire how far it has been brought about by the flatteries of coteries, by spite at some peculiarity in personal position, by jealousy of some compeer to whom higher honours were awarded. A vast amount of such conduct is also the result of defective judgment, prejudice, and erroneous impressions. There may be absolute purity of moral intention, but deplorable infirmity of understanding. Upon the whole, it may be pretty safely assumed that love of approbation now goes farther with public men than the love of money. The courtesy of a glass of wine is more ruinous to contemporary honesty than the glitter of gold. As to generals suspected of selling their armies, the usual fact is, that the man was simply defeated, as one of the two contending parties always must be. Such a thing has happened, we believe, as the selling of a post by a general—witness the case of Arnold; and Pichegru made some advances in a sale of his army to the Bourbons; but the great rarity of authenticated instances of this tremendous treachery, compared with the frequency of the suspicion, shows the latter in a most ridiculous light. Again, editors of literary reviews are capable, we well believe, of allowing both spite and good nature to operate in criticism, and may even be actuated, consciously or unconsciously, by a regard to the interests of parties connected with their publications; but that any one above the very lowest literary, moral, and social rank, would receive a direct bribe, is what we cannot believe; and this simply, because, from what we know of the class, we are sure that such is not amongst the means by which their conduct is to be swayed. With regard to the charge brought against ourselves, we will allow that we may be wrong in entertaining the opinions which we do on the general subject of emigration, and we may have been misled respecting various

countries which we have endeavoured to describe; but, like our compeers, we live a hundred years too late to be accessible to a bribe.

An amusing instance of wild popular suspicion occurred a few years ago to a gentleman who occasionally, for benevolent reasons, gives lectures on popular science in the provinces. He had commenced a series of lectures on one of the physical sciences in a large manufacturing village near Glasgow. It was at the time when Earl Grey, having carried the Reform Bill, was thought to be anxious to restrain the agitation into which the country had been thrown by his great measure. The two first lectures were attended by a large audience, and passed off very satisfactorily to both parties; but when the lecturer appeared for the third time, he found a mere handful of people on the forms. He made no remark at the time; but, on the fourth occasion, finding still fewer in attendance, he asked a member of the managing committee to what he was to ascribe this miserable falling-off. The man hesitated greatly, and for some time could not be induced to give an explanation; but he at length mentioned that the people had contracted a suspicion respecting their lecturer. They had become convinced that he was an emissary sent by the prime minister to beguile them, by means of scientific trifling, from that salutary watch over public affairs which they had long held. If we could describe the village where this occurred, and the humble employments of its inhabitants, the reader would have a good laugh at the idea of the venerable premier taking so much trouble about them. But this is not the only instance we have known of working-men of strong political opinions viewing with jealousy the efforts made by an enlightened philanthropy to improve their intellectual condition. Nor is it the only instance of a minister being suspected of very deep designs for working on popular feeling. We have heard the missionary cause seriously spoken of as a thing got up by Mr Pitt to divert public attention from his mode of carrying on the national affairs. The ludicrous thing here, to all who know what public men really are, is the credit it gives them for a profound policy. The honest folk who suspect such things, little think by how little wisdom, foresight, or reflection of any kind, the world is governed.

These ignorant suspicions are not always of an innocent or ludicrous nature. It must be well remembered with what gallant zeal the medical profession every where exerted themselves, on the occasion of the pestilence of 1831-2, first to soften the violence of the coming blow by precautionary measures, and afterwards to relieve the afflicted. We would say that, if the members of this benevolent profession had never in any other way distinguished themselves by their kindness towards their fellow-creatures, their exertions on that occasion ought to have fixed their character for ever. Yet, what was the feeling with which the lower populace in many places beheld their succourers? A suspicion of the grossest kind. It was believed that the physicians had poisoned the wells for the purpose of creating the disease. This was believed in many villages throughout Russia and Germany—afterwards in Britain—and finally in Spain and Italy; and in all those countries there were violent riots against the medical men, who had often to fly for their lives to places of concealment, while engaged in the very business of relieving the sick. Those men who of all others were doing and suffering most for the people in that hour of their calamity, were in several places hunted like noxious animals, and all this from the suspicion of a kind and degree of guilt such as has never perhaps been proved against any class of men even in the most barbarous times.

Much of this suspicion was probably owing to the mystery in which the medical profession is enveloped. It is a profession which seems to walk in the dark, as far as the common people are concerned. Its language is not the language of common life. The education required for it takes place under circumstances involving a good deal of the horrible. Between medical causes and effects, no relation can be discerned by common eyes. Thus "the doctors" unavoidably become objects of much wild surmise amongst the humbler classes. In particular, no expedients are thought too revolting for them to resort to, in order to obtain subjects for the dissecting-room. A few years ago, on the occasion of the celebrated Burke murders, we had a striking illustration of this tendency to impute all sorts of atrocities to the medical profession. While it was generally acknowledged that the guilt of the two principals was almost too much to have been supposed possible in men even of their wretched class, it was with the same breath more than surmised that the lecturing anatomists who purchased the bodies, had been all along aware of the way in which these were come by, and had thus virtually been the chief cause of the murders. For some time this notion held possession of the minds not only of the humbler classes, but of many others, while more than one journalist used every endeavour to give it plausibility. There was, no doubt, some appearance of a likelihood that the proceedings of the two murderers should have become matter of suspicion to the anatomists; yet how much more likely was it that these gentlemen never did conceive suspicion, than that they, men of good education and respectable position in society, would have been capable of encouraging a system of murder for the mere purpose of obtaining a thing which was not unattainable by innocent means!

If we seek for the causes of these popular suspicions, we shall find the first element in ignorance. Where the mind has no knowledge of other things by which to measure new phenomena, it is almost certain to make great mistakes. Thus, on the occurrence of the cholera morbus, the popular mind, knowing nothing of the natural causes for such a wide-spreading malady, readily ascribed it to one which they could understand, but which was just the most improbable in the world. Thus, also, when the conduct of some person much above their own station is under consideration, the populace, ignorant of the moral standards which exist in the superior class, readily attribute a motive, which, though it might operate in the low sphere, is quite inapplicable in the high one. Other elementary causes are to be found in the common disposition to think the worst where we feel no kind interest for the parties, and in the freaks of imagination when it is let loose without guide or data. There is, however, a peculiar class of cases, where another cause operates. In these, some simple circumstances, such as take place every hour of our lives without any thing coming of them, chance to lead to some great results. A light word, we shall suppose, spoken without any special intention in the private circle of a personage of importance, has a great effect on the face of public affairs. When such a thing happens, the thinking public seems quite unable to imagine or admit that so great a matter can have had a slight cause. There is a disposition to suppose a cause as great and onerous as the result. We then hear of "foul plot" and "base conspiracy," where there was nothing perhaps but the most simple, trivial, and innocent conduct. Many of our readers must have known such circumstances in their own lives, and felt how extremely difficult it was to act under them, as any explanation tracing back the mighty

turmoil to so atomic a cause, was sure to appear ridiculous, and had no chance of being listened to. On such an occasion, it is difficult for one's self to maintain a consciousness of pure intention. One almost feels disposed, like poor Strap when found in an equivocal situation at the roadside inn, to admit that, appearances being so much against us, we must have really been prompted by base motives, although totally unconscious of them at the time.

It may appear scarcely worth while to pay so much attention to this class of popular errors. Truth, however, appears to us of such importance, that we cannot imagine any kind of error unworthy of correction. If our remarks shall have the effect of checking, in but one man, in one instance, the propensity to suspect worse motives than the real ones, or of undecieving him in any erroneous impressions as to classes of society remote from himself, we shall not consider our labour as thrown away.

#### GENERAL ACCOUNT OF SAGO.

MANY must have seen sago brought forward as an article of dessert, and more recently seen it used as a component of common bread, without being aware of its natural character, and the peculiar circumstances attending its growth and preparation. The general impression of those who have seen it in its uncooked state, is, that it is a seed. We propose to rectify the common errors, and give some information respecting this article of food.

Sago is derived from the soft interior of a species of palm, which grows in various parts of the East Indies and neighbouring islands. The family of palms, it may be necessary for the bulk of our readers to premise, belongs to a class of trees, of which the fern is a familiar example in this country, which grow, not by concentric circles regularly added every year on the outside, as British trees mostly do, but by additions within, and which are therefore called *endogenous plants*, others being distinguished as *exogenous*. The sugar-cane is a notable example of the endogenous plants, many of which, like that well-known vegetable, have a soft pulpy interior or pith, forming a large proportion of the bulk of the tree. It is a curious circumstance relating to the trees which grow by internal additions, that the seeds of all of them have but one lobe, the seeds of exogenous plants on the contrary having two.

The particular tree from which sago is derived, is denominated, by the natives of the region of its birth, *Sagu*: hence our name for the article, and hence the appellation of *Sagum*, applied by naturalists to a genus of the palm family, to which the sago-bearing tree belongs. There are at least five species, if not a good many more, of the genus *Sagu*, growing in Sumatra, Java, the Molluccas, and the neighbouring continent; but most of these yield the farina in comparatively small quantities, and are not of any importance in that respect. The grand source of sago is the *Sagu genuina*, so named by Labillardiere, the naturalist who accompanied the expedition of La Perouse. He examined it in the Molluccas, where it abounds, and took drawings of it, from which it appears as a handsome but by no means elevated palm, the trunk being about ten feet in height, and the diameter two. The fruit is about the size of a pullet's egg, covered, like our figs, with imbricated scales, reversed—their fixed points being at the top of the fruit. Throughout the Indian Archipelago, the sago-tree is an object of the greatest importance, being the chief source of the food of the people. From that region it has latterly been introduced into our East Indian possessions, where it now grows extensively, particularly in Malabar. It is also reared in Madagascar and the Isle of France, and has even been transplanted to America. Probably there is no tropical country of little elevation in which it could not grow with care and attention be cultivated. It commonly grows in moist and marshy grounds. There it springs up naturally; its growth is rapid, under the direct rays of the scorching sun, and it speedily attains goodly dimensions. It propagates itself by offsets or shoots, from the roots, which for a time appear only like bushes at the foot of the full-grown trunk; ere long, however, these extend wide, and their stems shoot up like arrows, forming a thick forest. These, on arriving at maturity, are felled; plants soon again spring up, and proceed rapidly through their different stages, until they are again subjected to the axe, and made to yield their alimentary store for the service of man.

Though the fruit, especially its pulpy kernel, and not less the *cabbage*, as it is familiarly called, that is to say, the germ of the foliage at the top of the tree, are very generally esteemed as articles of luxury, yet these do not constitute the richness of the tree. This consists in the farinaceous (mealy) and glutinous pith which constitutes the greatest proportion of the trunk,

and which, as in the bamboo, or the common reed, is arranged in separate sections, and surrounded with a harder encasement. When the palm is ripe, as we have already said, it is felled, and cut as near to the root as possible, that none of the nutritious portion may be lost. All the pith is removed, and by very simple processes is rendered fit for food. When the interior of the trunk is examined, it appears formed of a spongy cellular substance, penetrated by a number of tubes, which in time become tough threads, and consequently differ from the nutritive substance of the spongy cells. When viewed through the magnifier, the small cavities of the cellular tissue are found to be filled with very minute globules of different shapes and sizes, which apparently go to compose the sago; and as our potato, by undergoing the process of being converted into farina or starch, exhibits a fibrous portion as well as the pure starch, so is it with the sago: One portion is nearly pure farina or sago; and the other, the fibrous filaments or thready parts, distinguished by the natives by the name of *da*, is of inferior value, and appropriated to subordinate uses. The former is used by man; the latter is given to pigs, poultry, and inferior animals. When laid aside and left to ferment, it is apt to breed a particular kind of larva, or worm, which is esteemed as a first-rate delicacy in the Molluccas; and also to produce a peculiar species of mushroom, which, according to Sir Thomas Raffles and Mr Craufurd, is very much prized.

The process of manufacture to which the pith is subjected, is somewhat different, as it is intended for native consumption, or meant to be exported to Europe and other temperate and civilised countries. So thoroughly, however, is it prepared by nature for the use of man, that frequently the inhabitants of the islands where it grows do nothing more than cut as many slices as they require from the pith, and roast it, as we do our potatoes, previous to use. And so great is the purity of the fecula, that it will remain for a twelvemonth in the felled tree without spoiling, or undergoing any deterioration. Sometimes it is, much in the same way, preserved in a hollow bamboo. Far more frequently, however, the natives subject it to a process precisely similar in principle, and very much in practice, to that whereby our invaluable potato is converted into farina or starch. The details of the process vary somewhat in the different islands. The following is the account supplied by our countryman Forrest. "The tree, after being cut down, is divided into lengths of five or six feet. A part of the hard wood is then sliced off; and the workman, coming to the pith, cuts across the longitudinal fibres and the pith together, leaving a part at each end uncut, so that when it is excavated there remains a trough, into which the pulp is again put, mixed with water, and beaten with a piece of wood. Then the fibres, separated from the pulp, float at top, and the flour subsides. After being cleared in this way by several waters, the pulp is put into cylindrical baskets made of the leaves of the tree; and if it is to be kept some time, those baskets are generally sunk in fresh water, to keep it moist." When prepared in a larger way, more effective and expeditious methods readily suggest themselves. The trunk being divided into convenient portions, and split asunder by the application of wedges, the sago is scooped out with an instrument resembling an adze. After being reduced to the appearance of saw-dust, water is copiously added in troughs, whereby the meal is separated from the thready filaments, and after resting for a time apart, subsides. The wet meal is now laid on flat wicker baskets to dry; it is then kneaded together, and formed into little cakes, some very small, like our finger biscuits, and others of larger dimensions. These cakes are lastly put into moulds of corresponding size, and baked in the fire. One tree will yield about three or four hundred-weight of this aliment.

The Indian islanders use it in a variety of methods, as we employ our corn, or cereal grains. It is sometimes simply prepared with water as a pottage, or with milk; and sometimes it is made into broth or soup with meat and vegetables. It is sometimes again converted into richer stews, and frequently mingled with their delicious spices and aromatics, as rice with curry. Upon the whole, it is found a most agreeable, as it is a varied and universally used nourishment.

The sago intended for European commerce, though treated on the same principle, is generally, if not always, differently prepared, and this by being *pearled*, as it is called, by methods of which we believe we have no very precise knowledge. So uniformly and beautifully is this process executed, that the art was long taken for nature's work, and the product in this part of the world was universally regarded as the minute seed of some unknown plant. Suspicion was aroused concerning the accuracy of this opinion, on observing that these grains were of different sizes, sometimes as large as a coriander seed, and sometimes, and especially lately, not half the size. Our additional acquaintance with these distant regions has now dissipated the error on this point. As to the details of the process, we still remain in considerable uncertainty. "To bring it to this state," says Mr Forrest, "it must be first moistened, and then passed through a sieve into an iron pot, which enables it to assume a globular form; so that all our grained sago is half baked, and will keep long." Sir Thomas Raffles and Mr Craufurd, again, inform us that it is introduced

into a mill similar to those with which, in France, they *pearl* barley. The account which we have obtained, not from authors, but from private and respectable individuals, is, that the pearling is performed chiefly on the sago which is grown in our own Indian possessions; that for accomplishing the purpose it must be sent in its ruder state into China, where the art is alone understood; that thence a large proportion finds its way to the great free port of Singapore, where it is shipped for Europe. That the substantial qualities of sago are in any degree modified or improved by this process, remains to be established. It is possible the farina may be subjected to some additional process of refinement, but little is probably to be effected in this way; and the principal effect, besides the slight baking, appears to be produced in its appearance, rendering it more pleasant to the eye.

The sago of commerce consists of very small, smooth, round grains, of a dull white, or pale rosy hue; it is inodorous, very hard, insipid to the taste, dissolving imperfectly in the mouth, breaking with difficulty, or rather flattening only, under the teeth: it swells and softens in cold water, and in boiling, and always maintains its globular form. It thus differs from most feculae in its consistence, its insolubility, the difficulty of again reducing it to powder, its colour, and tendency to granulate. Like potato starch, it may be preserved for an indefinite period, if kept dry; but if allowed to get damp or wet, it spoils, so that it does not always reach these countries equally pure.

#### A SIMPLE STORY.

THE following little story derives no interest from any surprising entanglements in the plot, or peculiar romance in the situations. It will, however, we trust, be found somewhat striking as a series of actual and recent occurrences in the life of an individual, while, as it chanced, there is not wanting in its conclusion a pretty strong inference in favour of prudent and virtuous conduct.

In a small town, in a certain part of Scotland, there lived some time since a respectable writer or law-agent, whom we shall call Brydon, a widower, with a family of two daughters and one son, all of them grown up. Mr Brydon, like many of his profession, kept up a respectable appearance in society, but in reality had nothing to depend upon except the current proceeds of his business. At his death, which took place rather unexpectedly, he left his daughters entirely dependent on the exertions of their brother, who had been trained to the pursuit of his parent's profession. But the son was not long in following the father to the grave, and the two girls were then without a friend or guide in the world. Necessity compelled them immediately to make an endeavour to support themselves by the use of their needles, and, to do them justice, they set about it actively and ungrudgingly. The elder Miss Brydon, however, was of weakly constitution, and subject to frequent attacks of severe illness, so that the whole burden, almost, of their maintenance, fell on the younger sister, Margaret. She toiled incessantly; yet, let her do what she might, she was barely able to earn enough to procure the mere necessities of life, where its comforts were almost indispensable to the poor invalid. Whether the issue would have been otherwise or not under happier circumstances, it is impossible to say; but, as it was, the elder of the sisters continued to decline until she died.

Alone in the world, friendless and penniless, with a heart weighed down by these successive calamities in her once happy family, Margaret Brydon, then only eighteen years of age, struggled for some time longer to maintain herself in her native place. But she found it a difficult task to live upon sympathy, of which she received a sufficiency, although extremely little real assistance came her way. At length she bethought her of a female relative in England, a cousin of her late father, and a person usually reported to be in wealthy circumstances. With this individual, it is true, Mr Brydon had never kept up any correspondence, and had never mentioned her to his family but as a woman of rude manners and hard heart. Poor Margaret, nevertheless, thought that her destitute condition might awake pity even in the breast of such a being, supposing her to prove to be all that she had been represented. A journey to Nottingham, where this relative resided, was therefore resolved upon, and it was soon accomplished, as Margaret was not burdened with any great effects to render removal difficult.

For three months after her arrival in Nottingham, did Miss Brydon reside with her relative, whom she found to be all and more than her father had said. The old lady, if such a name should be given to her, had started in life as a house-maid, coarse and uneducated, and had ended her career of service as the housekeeper of a

\* Forrest's Voyage to the Molluccas.



nobleman, who at his death left her a considerable annuity to subsist upon in her latter days. Her original rudeness of character had only been aggravated by after-habits of petty domestic rule; and although she had asked Margaret to stay with her, she behaved subsequently with such unkindness, as to make life almost insupportable to the poor girl. Finally, a proposal made by the old woman, who added a keen love of money to her other qualities, that Miss Brydon should take upon herself the duties of house-servant at the coming term, brought matters to a point. "Heaven knows," said Margaret to herself, "that I am not unwilling to work! But if I am to maintain myself, I shall at least do it where I may have peace." The result was, that another vicissitude took place in our heroine's condition. She sought one of the great manufacturing establishments of the town, and was fortunate enough to be employed in executing a particular kind of needle-work. She would fain have had it in her power to work in private, but this could not be allowed in the circumstances. A considerable number of other girls were engaged in the same occupation in the establishment, and to their number Margaret joined herself. Happily, the remuneration for that variety of work was respectable in amount, and she was enabled to take a little lodging, and to keep herself above all fear of want.

For some time Miss Brydon pursued her humble occupation without having her fate chequered by any new incident of importance. At length some circumstances occurred, which gave her at first a considerable degree of uneasiness. One of the numerous partners of the establishment, a gentleman in the prime of life, and who chanced frequently to come on business errands to the room where Margaret wrought, began to take particular and unpleasant notice of her. She bore it in silence for a time, trusting that the fancy would be a passing one; but when, on one occasion, he began to praise her in a way which females in good society are not accustomed to, she gently but firmly told him that "such language was disagreeable and painful to her," and begged "him, as he was a gentleman, to desist." Mr. Middleton, for such was the merchant's name, started, and stammered out an apology. He had never before heard the sound of Miss Brydon's voice, except in mere monosyllables, and he was surprised at the grace and breeding apparent in her manner and expression. "I—I beg pardon," he stammered for the third or fourth time, as he retired. Margaret made no other reply than by a gentle inclination of her head.

Mr. Middleton did not, however, give up his visits to the work-room of Margaret and her companions. On the contrary, he came thither more frequently than ever, and it was still to the young Scotswoman that he directed his attention, though in a very different style from that used on former occasions. Still he found it very difficult to induce Miss Brydon to enter into conversation, or lay aside the retiring coldness which she had assumed at the first. But his respectful manner and address prevailed ultimately to a certain extent, and so far broke down the barrier of honourable and incidentally reserve as to make him aware that she was of good parentage, and well educated, as well as sensible and intelligent. Things were in this state when Mr. Middleton became suddenly ill. He was subject to inflammatory attacks in the chest, and the recurrence of that complaint on this occasion made his friends alarmed lest consumption should follow. On this account he was ordered off, as soon as he could be moved, to Devonshire. Before he went thither, however, he showed how deep was the impression which Miss Brydon had made on his mind, by sending a note to her in the following terms:—"Dear Miss Brydon, you will be aware that I have been ill. I should be the last person to desire that sorrow of any kind should fall to your lot, yet I confess that it would give me pleasure to know that you were sorry for me. I am advised to go for a time to the south of England. Will you permit me to write to you while I am absent? Grant me but this; I do not ask you at present to write to me again. I am," &c. Margaret returned an answer consenting to his request, and briefly expressing her regret for his illness.

While in Devonshire, Mr. Middleton wrote once or twice according to his proposition. He described the beautiful scenery of the Devon in his letters, spoke of the excellent effect produced on his health, and expressed a warm wish to be home again, hinting plainly at his resolution then to "ask a peculiar favour" from the reader of his epistles. But foreknowledge is a thing unknown to man. Before Mr. Middleton returned to Nottingham, Margaret had left it. Her close application to work had injured her health, and she found it absolutely necessary to allow herself some temporary relaxation. Fortunately, an invitation came to her about this time from one of the few friends with whom she maintained a correspondence in her native place. Margaret took advantage of the opportunity, and was in Scotland when Mr. Middleton arrived in Nottingham. He resolved to follow her, and assigning a desire for change of scene as the cause, took upon himself the commercial journey to the north, which had usually been performed for the house by a traveller.

In the course of this route he came to the native town of Miss Brydon. But he knew not the name of the friend with whom she resided, nor could the people of the inn answer his inquiries on the point. He could only hope that chance might cast her in

his way. An hour had scarcely elapsed, when, as he sat at the inn-parlour window, he saw Miss Brydon pass. He sprang up, and followed her. She was greatly surprised to see him. He walked with her a little way, and then entreated her to enter the inn with him, as he could not communicate to her on the street all that he wished to do. Margaret demurred. "My dear Miss Brydon," said the gentleman, "do not refuse me this. I will ask the landlady to be present with us. Your delicacy of feeling is too precious to me to be treasured upon by any act of mine." The young lady at length consented, and in the course of a few minutes longer she had given her promise to become the wife of Mr. Middleton.

The accepted lover of our heroine had to complete his commercial rounds, and it was settled that, immediately after his return to Nottingham, he should send for his bride and present her to his friends. But Mr. Middleton only reached Nottingham to suffer another attack of his former complaint, and the first tidings which poor Margaret received from him were dated from Devonshire, whither he had again been sent. Instead of being summoned to a happy marriage, Miss Brydon was called upon by her betrothed to come instantly to England, that he might see her *once again* before he died. "Take any conveyance—four horses if necessary; think not of expenses, but come—come with speed." Such was the close of the letter. Margaret hesitated not a moment to comply with its demands. But the journey, however speedily performed, was a long one, and she did not arrive there until two hours after Mr. Middleton had breathed his last!

This was a serious trial for the poor girl. She was a being alone in the world; and just as the hope was held out to her of having a strong support to lean upon—a strong arm to guide her for life—her prospects were at once and most painfully blighted. Her affection for Mr. Middleton had been of the temperate kind founded upon friendly and grateful esteem, but her regret was not the less sincere. She was, however, of that gentle and patient temperament, which makes no violent display of feeling, and, by bending, perhaps escapes in part the force of the blast. Her deceased lover had left a small sum to be delivered to her—all that his hurried illness left at his command—under the plea of paying her expenses in coming to him, and she received also an open letter, which it was his wish that she should present in person to his mother. This paper described the situation in which Margaret and he had stood, and requested Mrs. Middleton to be kind to her. After wetting with a tear her lover's new-made grave, Margaret slowly returned to Nottingham, ill at ease both in mind and body. The old lady *did* speak kindly to her when she called with the letter, and wished to see her again. But Miss Brydon had resolved to go back for a time to her native place, and there remain in quiet, till her mind had recovered from the late shock, and her frame had renewed its exhausted strength.

She fulfilled her intention, and staid in Scotland for several months. Both her strength and spirits were gradually recruited; and well it was that the case stood so, as she saw no course before her but that of returning to daily toil. She was just hesitating in what field to resume her honest endeavours, when she met accidentally, at a friend's house, a lady from Nottingham, who, on learning her wish to get employment for her needle, pressed her anxiously to return to that town. "I know various establishments where I am sure I can procure you good employment at once," Margaret told the lady of her having been there before, but disclosed nothing further, as well from sensitiveness of feeling as from prudence. The issue was, that she accompanied the lady soon after to England. "I am certain," thought Margaret, "of making there a peaceable living. Few can know my story; nor could they extract from it, if they did, any thing to my disadvantage." With these thoughts Margaret again entered Nottingham, and her friend immediately set about getting an engagement for her. It has just been mentioned that she did not relate the particulars of her former stay in the town to the lady, nor had she told the names of her former employers. Strange to say, these were the very parties to whom the lady went, and from whom she obtained a promise of ample employment for the young Scotswoman. When she came to Miss Brydon, and told her that she would have for her masters the house of Boyle, Middletons, and Co., our poor heroine was startled and stunned. But she soon regained her composure. "Why should I be unwilling to go there again?" she reasoned internally; "to be sure I might have borne a very different place—but it is silly to recall such thoughts. These people can know nothing of which I have reason to be ashamed. They will perhaps even be kinder to me than others might be. Yes, it would be weakness to refuse the offer." By exerting this quiet firmness of mind, Margaret gained the victory over the feelings at first awakened in her breast. She returned to work in the place where she had formerly been. In doing so, she was little aware of the happy consequences which were to follow therefrom.

The lady who brought Margaret to England did not rest satisfied with merely procuring work for her. She introduced her young protégée to all her friends, and, among others, caused her to meet the Middletons, the mother and brothers of the late Mr. Middleton. Previously to this, Margaret had seen the necessity of informing the kind lady of her whole history, or rather gratitude had prompted the disclosure. The Middletons were very kind to the object

of their late relative's affection. They even pressed her to come and reside with them, but Margaret preferred her honourable independence; and the only request she preferred to them was, that she should be allowed to work in private. Her conduct did not go unrewarded. It was the cause of attracting to her the especial notice of the younger Mr. Boyle, a junior partner of the house. He met her occasionally in the evenings, when her toil was done, at the house of her friend, and ultimately he made her an offer of his hand and fortune. It was accepted.

We are not now speaking of things of a musty date. Margaret Brydon's marriage was seen by us in the columns of a newspaper but a few days ago. We earnestly trust that her future career will be as happy as its commencement has been discreet, modest, and honourable.

#### IMPROVEMENTS IN THE FRENCH SYSTEM OF POSTAGE.

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN PARIS.

THERE is no department of public business in France, in which more improvements have taken place within a few years, than the Post-Office, and certainly none in which the national pride which opposes itself to copying the improvements of other countries, has been so little allowed to prevail. Ten years ago, the communication by post with many parts of the south and west of France was only on three or four days of the week; it is now every day. The communication with England was only four days weekly, and letters were sixty hours on the road, whereas the communication is now daily, with the exception of one day, arising from there being no receipt or departure of letters from London on the Sunday; and instead of sixty hours, letters are only thirty-six hours on the road. On nearly all the roads leading to great commercial towns, such as Bordeaux, Marseilles, Rouen, and Havre, the former speed by *Malle Poste*, of little more than six English miles per hour, has been exchanged for the *Estafette* speed of ten miles, and occasionally more. A letter dispatched from Paris, at 6 o'clock in the evening, arrives at either Boulogne or Havre on the following morning at 8 or 9 o'clock, whereas a few years ago it did not reach in time for an answer to be sent on the same day. In what is called the rural post, the melioration has been equally great. In many villages of considerable size there was no delivery at all, and the inhabitants were compelled to send for their letters to the next post-town; and in others the letter-carrier arrived only twice or three times a-week. Now, almost every village has its daily delivery. In Paris, the delivery of letters, which was frequently at as late an hour of the day as 2 o'clock in the afternoon, now takes place, owing to the better regulated arrival of the mails, and the use of omnibuses for the carriers, similar to those of the English General Post-Office, at 8 or 9 o'clock in the morning, and it was even earlier, but as many of the porters were not up when the distribution took place, as it did at 7 o'clock in the morning in the summer season, the hour was changed. In the departure of letters there has also been great melioration, although it falls short of the perfection of the delivery. A few years ago, no letter could be sent to England unless the postage was paid, and 2 o'clock in the afternoon was the latest hour at which they could be received. Now they need not be paid beforehand, and paid letters are received until 4 o'clock, and unpaid letters until 5 o'clock. The latter hour is, however, too early for the receipt of letters, as merchants do not leave the *Bourse* until nearly 5 o'clock, when they have not time to prepare their letters for the same day. For the accommodation of commercial men, the hour of departure for the mails ought to be changed from 6 o'clock to 7, and letters ought to be received at the General Post-Office, as in London, up to within half an hour of the making up of the bags. Looking, however, at what was formerly the case, the improvement is very great.

The changes which have taken place have not been accomplished without difficulty, particularly as regarded the intercourse with England. The first serious attempt to improve the Post-Office communication between the two countries, was during the postmastership of the Duke of Richmond. The noble duke was not well seconded by the chiefs of his department, and he had also to struggle against the influence of the late Mr. Rothschild, whose system of expresses and exclusive information was to be destroyed by the projected change. Under the old mode of communication, Mr. Rothschild received expresses from Paris a day earlier than the arrival of letters by post; and persons who could not, like him, bear an expense of thirty pounds for an express, were compelled to leave

him in possession of the field for twenty-four hours, whilst on two days of the week he had not even the Post-Office delivery to fear, so that a single express would sometimes give him an advantage of two days. The resistance of Mr Rothschild, therefore, was very natural; for by the proposed improvement, any person receiving a letter by the post would be on a footing with him, and he could no longer act upon the funds with intelligence which others could not receive until his purpose had been served. Whether the influence of this great capitalist in Paris was one of money or credit, I will not attempt to determine; but having been engaged in two missions with a view to bring about the desired change, I know that some influence was strongly exercised, and that it required all the energy of the Duke of Richmond to contend against interested motives abroad, and indifference at home. It was not until the merchants generally in London and Paris exerted themselves strenuously, that the object could be attained.

The great melioration of the roads in France, many of which have been macadamised, the substitution in some of them of light four-wheeled carriages, carrying no passengers except the courier,\* and on others of new Malle-Postes constructed for speed, for the old Malle-Postes, have effected wonders in the Post-Office service as to time; and although this might still be shortened, there are no complaints respecting it. This is not the case, however, as to the charge for postage, which is very high. The inland postage will not indeed appear enormous to the English reader, when informed that for a letter from Rouen to Paris, a distance of 80 miles, only eight sous, or 4d. English, is charged; and from Boulogne to Paris, a distance of 130 miles, only ten sous, or 5d. English; but as the postage is here charged by weight, and as the simple postage, as it is called, is only applicable to a small and thin sheet of paper, and rapidly increases if there be an enclosure or two, the tax becomes very heavy in France when compared with the gains of persons in trade. From London to Paris, the postage of a letter on thin paper and without enclosures, is forty sous, or 1s. 8d. English; a single sheet of common Bath post costs fifty sous, or 2s.; and a sheet of superior thick post paper is charged three francs, or half-a-crown. Even at the lowest rate of charge, a father writing to his son in Paris once a-week, and receiving an answer weekly, incurs an annual charge of L.7. In former days, when the postage was even higher than it is now, and the Post-Office authorities were less delicate than they now are as to the sacredness of correspondence, an English gentleman published the following caution, and which was more valuable for its moral than its poetry, in an English newspaper:—

When sending to France, it is better and safer  
To write on thin paper and seal with a wafer.  
If you write on thick paper, there's the d—l to pay,  
And wax can be melted to learn what you say.

The *Bureau Noir*, in which letters were opened by means of an ingenious process, by first copying the impressions and melting the wax, then resealing, and causing the letter to appear as if it had not been opened, for the purpose of political persecution, or amusing the court with the secrets of correspondents, is now, much to the honour of the government, abolished; consequently, the advice contained in the foregoing lines as to the mode of fastening letters, is superfluous; but it is still good as to the paper on which English correspondents should write.

There are many other meliorations of the French Post-Office, which can only be appreciated by persons residing in France. The letter-carriers, though they receive but small salaries, are now selected with much greater care than formerly, and allowed to retain many legitimate perquisites, by which the remuneration is so increased that there is no temptation to dishonesty. Amongst their perquisites is the supply of almanacs to the houses in their delivery; the price is left to the generosity of the purchaser, and is proportioned to the civility of the carrier. There are some carriers who realise as much as a thousand francs a-year from this source. The rapidity with which an ill-directed letter finds its way, is not the least admirable of the arrange-

\* These carriages are called *Estafettes*. Within the last four months, another improvement has taken place by the introduction of a new description of mail coaches carrying passengers, but which are much lighter than the old *Malle Poste*. The new carriages are already running on the roads to Bordeaux, Caen, Strasbourg, and Lyons. They are drawn by four horses, and driven by a coachman as in England, many serious accidents having occurred by the postilion system. On the three first named roads, the carriages are in the form of a *coupe*, to contain three passengers, the courier sitting behind in a covered seat; the number of persons conveyed, therefore, including the driver, is five. On the Lyons road, the shape of the *Malle Poste* resembles the berlin, and four passengers are accommodated. The weight of the dispatches, and the luggage of the passengers, with that allowed for merchandise as a gratuity to the courier, varies from 800 to 1400 pounds. The relays are supplied by the postmasters, who receive a slight addition to the sum formerly paid, in order that they may provide a lighter and faster description of horses than those used for the ordinary posting. The rate of speed is regulated, according to circumstances, at from eight to ten miles per hour.

ments of the French Post-Office. I have seen a letter which had been handed from district to district for inquiries, until it had been through at least ten districts, and travelled over as many miles, reach its destination within four or five hours of the time at which it would have been delivered if there had been no error in the address. Other points worthy of praise might be noticed, but all the improvements and advantages are thrown into the background by one great evil—the high rate of postage, in which no change has taken place, but which we have now reason to believe will be immediately lowered to an uniform low charge as soon as the working of the new system in England shall have brought forth its results.

The important question of an uniform rate of postage was brought under consideration here, almost immediately after the appearance of Mr Rowland Hill's plan in England, and at once found favour with the authorities, who are only waiting for some experience as to the machinery, and an accurate idea of the real amount of postage which would defray the expenditure, to introduce a change in France. M. Piron, the sub-director of the General Post-Office, has published a pamphlet, in which he proposes that the tax upon single letters (letters within the prescribed weight) should be uniformly one *decime* (a penny), within the limits of the department in which they are forwarded; and two *decimes* for any other distance in France, however great; and that there should be stamped covers, the weight of which is not to be charged; and that, in the first instance, the use of these covers, although to be strongly recommended, shall not be compulsory; it is to become so, however, after a certain time. He also proposes that there shall be a double service for the large towns, the interests of which would be promoted by a day post. It is a curious fact that the idea of stamped covers, which has been regarded as new in England, was adopted in France as long ago as the year 1653. In that year a M. Velayre obtained from the government the privilege of placing letter-boxes in various parts of Paris, into which letters were dropped, which were taken out three times a-day by his agents, and delivered without charge to the persons to whom they were addressed. In order to secure the delivery of these letters, they were put under stamped covers or bands, purchased at the rate of one sous each, at an office established for that purpose by M. Velayre. In those early days of correspondence by letter, when the number of letter-writers was comparatively small, the plan of M. Velayre did not succeed, and it was not until the year 1759 that the Paris *petite poste* was regularly established. Nothing, however, could be more absurd than to argue unfavourably of the plan now proposed in these days of increased population and multiplied intercourse, because it was not successful nearly two hundred years ago. The omnibus is not a new invention; and there are persons who, when it was revived a few years ago, predicted its failure, because it had been abandoned by our ancestors: yet it is now become almost as great a necessity as our daily food.

One of the objections to a low uniform postage in France—and the same was said in England—is, that the receipts will not be in proportion to the increased expenditure. The same was said, however, of the proposal to establish a daily communication in France with those towns which had previously received letters only three or four times a-week. Let us see what the result has been. The increased expense of this service was 3,000,000 of francs annually; in a single year, 1828, there was an increase of 2,500,000 francs in the receipts, leaving a deficiency of only 500,000 francs; in 1830 there was a further increase of 3,000,000 francs for the two years, an additional increase of 1,000,000 francs from 1830 to the end of 1832, and a still further increase of 4,557,000 francs for the four years ending in 1836. On the rural service, which for many reasons presented less chance of success, the result has been equally favourable. In less than nine months from its commencement in 1829, the receipts had increased 3,000,000 francs. These are very encouraging facts for the advocates of the proposed change in other countries, and we may corroborate them by referring to what has taken place in the establishment of the omnibus communication in the French capital; for the increase of epistolary correspondence, like that of persons, must depend upon the reduced rate at which it can be obtained. On a single line of omnibus in Paris, between four and five thousand persons are conveyed daily at an expense of six sous each, and there are ten or twelve other lines, averaging each, at least, from twelve to fifteen hundred persons per day, and yet the number of hackney coaches and cabriolets has not decreased. All this, therefore, is an addition to the former circulation, arising from diminished expense.

M. Piron, whose long experience renders him a competent authority, considers that the number of letters would be increased to an almost incredible extent if the rate of postage were reduced, and he takes a similar line of argument to that which I have attempted above. He states that in twenty years, from 1816 to 1836, the tax of one-tenth upon the proprietors of diligences, and other carriages conveying passengers, increased from 1,669,367 francs to 4,305,369 francs, being nearly triple, although there had been no reduction in the charge, thus showing the growth of communication, whilst in the same period the net revenue of the Post-Office had only risen from 19,825,900 francs to 35,600,000 francs. The advantages which may be expected to arrive

from a low uniform rate of postage, and the introduction of stamped covers, in France, are thus summed up by a French journal:—

"A great boon to the commercial public, and, in particular, to the poorer classes, who have now no means of communication except by a pecuniary sacrifice which their means will ill afford.

A pecuniary advantage even to the revenue, the receipts of which would be augmented in the end, although, for a short time, they might not be in proportion with the increase of expenditure.

An increase of rapidity in the Post-Office department, by the use of stamped covers, and a diminution of error on the part of the employes.

A great diminution in the number of rejected letters, prospectuses, &c., now refused, the postage not having been paid, and which are generally called *lettres d'attrappe*.

A cessation of the demoralising temptation which presents itself to clerks and porters, who, instead of paying the postage of the letters which they are charged to pay for at the Post-Office, put the money into their pockets, and throw the letters into the box."

#### A CONVERSATION WITH AN ENGLISH PEASANT.

In a paper on the state of the peasantry in the county of Kent, contained in the third volume issued by the Central Society of Education, and to which we lately referred in our articles "the Kent Disturbances," the writer reports a conversation which he had with a peasant of that district, very remarkable in its nature, and calculated to be of some service at the present time:—

"To show how great is the ignorance existing regarding the rights of property, and of the advantages accruing to all from a sacred observance of those rights—and, at the same time, by how simple a process that ignorance, as well as the ill feeling towards the wealthy classes resulting from it, may be in great part removed—I subjoin the following anecdote. Talking one day with some men in the village of Dunkirk in Kent, I observed, it was a pity there were no gentry in the neighbourhood. 'Well,' said one fellow, 'for my part I see no good they are to us; all they do is to make hard laws to grind us down. There was my poor brother clapt into prison, and his wife and family left to starve, all because he had killed a few hares.' 'Well,' said I, 'what right had he to kill other persons' hares?' 'Other persons, indeed! why weren't they as much his as another's?' 'Because he had no property in the land which fed them.' 'Ay, that's just it, but he ought to have had though.' 'How! do you mean to say that every body ought to have land?' 'Yes, to be sure I do. Look here now: didn't God give the land to all?' 'Well, what of that?' 'Why, then, a few can't have a right to the whole of it?' 'But I say they may.' 'Then how do you make out that?' 'Suppose every man had had his share, I suppose you'll allow he had a right to do what he liked with it?' 'Why, yes; I can't say no to that.' 'Well, then, suppose one man wishes to sell his share, and another wishes to buy it, they would have a right to do so.' 'Why, yes; no doubt of that.' 'Well, suppose, after that, the buyer saves up more money, and sets up a shop, and clears a good deal, and other men see what he is doing and want to do the same, but they have no money, and they offer their land to him, and he buys it; has he not a right to do so?' 'Yes, to be sure, if he gives them the money for it.' 'Well, then, you see here is a man who has got a good deal of land, and others have lost theirs, and you own it's all right?' 'Ay, ay, that's all well enough; but our squire didn't all get their land in that way.' 'Perhaps not, but then those they got it from did.' 'But if a man makes money and buys land, hasn't he a right to leave it to his children, or to any body else he chooses?' 'Why, I can't say but what he has.' 'So, my friend, you see one man may have half a county, and another not half an acre, and yet the last has no fair right to complain.' 'Why, sir, to be sure you do make it out somehow, there's no denying that; but then it's a hard case one man's good should be another man's harm.' 'But it is not: suppose a rich man were to come and build a cotton-mill in your neighbourhood, and your children could earn 10s. a-week each in it, you wouldn't think there was much harm in that?' 'Harm! no, indeed; it would be the best thing ever happened to us; for you see, sir, we are often puzzled to get work here.' 'Well, but how much would it take to build such a mill and fit it up with machinery?' 'Why, I can't tell; but I suppose a good deal.' 'Then I can tell you a very moderate sized one would cost L.20,000.' 'Indeed! that's a main sum!' 'Do you think the poor people in any place could ever club such a sum together?' 'Never, sir; not if they lived to the age of Adam, and tasted nothing stronger than water.' 'So, then, if the rich man didn't come and build the mill, the poor people never could do it.' 'No, that's certain.' 'Then you see the wealth of the rich man in this case is a real advantage to the poor?' 'To be sure it is, sir; and I was quite a fool like not to see it before.' 'But did you ever read of such things?' 'No, never, sir.' 'Did you ever see the Penny Magazine?' 'No, can't say as I ever did.' 'But you read the newspaper?' 'No, I can't say as I can undertake for that; but I read a little in the Testament.' 'But you talk of these things with your neighbours?' 'No, sir, not much of that; you see, sir, though some of us are 'cute enough in some things, we aren't quite up to what you have been talking of, and there isn't no one here as can talk of these things to us.'"

The author, after producing various instances of the prevalence of superstition among the peasantry (such as belief in witchcraft and supernatural influences), concludes by observing—"And yet some persons are alarmed at what they term the over-education of the people! They may be perfectly easy on that score! If ever the rights of property shall be violated, and the progress of



civilisation checked by a servile war in this country, the disaster will come, not from the education of the lower classes, but their want of it; not from their knowledge, but their ignorance; an ignorance mainly chargeable, and therefore righteously visited, upon those who, called upon by the station they hold in the country to forward the cause of education amongst the people, have selfishly in some instances, ignorantly in others, and in all unwisely, shrunk from the performance of their noblest duties."

## HARRY LORREQUER.

"CONFESSIONS OF HARRY LORREQUER" is the title given to a series of papers at present in course of publication, in monthly numbers, after the *Pickwick* fashion, and illustrated, in like manner, by engravings from the burin of the artist whose pleasure it is to be known by the name of Phiz.\* The *Confessions*, as their title indicates, profess to give a narrative of the personal adventures of the writer, though it is pretty obvious that this form of composition has been adopted merely as a convenient one for stringing together a succession of sketches of a very varied kind, the scene of which shifts hither and thither, with great and enlivening rapidity. Ireland is the locality, however, in which the chief incidents of the earlier numbers are supposed to take place, and in this portion of the work the author has displayed much graphic humour, of that strong and salient kind which was unknown in our literature from the days of Smollett till those of Boz. The vein of *Lorrequer*, though not original in any marked degree, is vigorous, rich, and racy, and the general effect is admirably aided by the illustrations. We select the following coach adventures as a specimen of the work, principally because they chance to be readily comprehensible in a detached form.

Harry *Lorrequer*, Esq., subaltern in the —th regiment of foot, is about to start from Dublin for Kilkenny, in order to rejoin his regiment after leave of absence. His friend Tom O'Flaherty presses him much to stay in Dublin a few days longer; "but (says *Lorrequer*) I mentioned the necessity of my at once proceeding to head-quarters, and all other reasons for my precipitancy failing, concluded with that really knock-down argument, 'I have taken my place.' This, I need scarcely add, finished the matter—at least I have never known it fail in such cases. Tell your friends that your favourite child is in the measles—your best friend waiting your aid in an awkward scrape—your one vote only wanting to turn the scale in an election. Tell them, I say, each or all of these, or a hundred more like them, and to any one you so speak, the answer is—'Pooh, pooh, my dear fellow, never fear—don't fuss yourself—take it easy—to-morrow will do just as well.' If, on the other hand, however, you reject such flimsy excuses, and simply say, 'I'm booked in the mail,' the opposition at once falls to the ground, and your quondam antagonist, who was ready to quarrel with you, is at once prepared to assist in packing your portmanteau.

Having soon satisfied my friend Tom that resistance was in vain, I took an early dinner with him at Morrison's, and we chatted away over old times and old friends, forgetting all else but the topics we talked of, till the timepiece over the chimney first apprised me that two whole hours had gone by, and that it was now seven o'clock, the very hour the coach was to start. I started up at once, and, notwithstanding all Tom's representations of the impossibility of my being in time, had dispatched waiters in different directions for a jarvey, more than ever determined upon going; so often is it that when real reasons for our conduct are wanting, any casual or chance opposition confirms us in an intention which before was but uncertain. Seeing me so resolved, Tom at length gave way, and advised my pursuing the mail, which must be now gone at least ten minutes, and which, with smart driving, I should probably overtake before getting free of the city, as they have usually many delays in so doing. I at once ordered out the 'yellow post-chaise,' and before many minutes had elapsed, I started in pursuit of his majesty's Cork and Kilkenny mail-coach.

"Which way now, your honour?" said a shrill voice from the dark—for such the night had already become, and threatened, with a few heavy drops of straight rain, the fall of a tremendous shower.

"The Naas road," said I; "and, harkye, my fine fellow, if you overtake the coach in half an hour, I'll double your fare."

"Ay, ay, I'll do my endavour," said the youth; at the same instant dashing in both spurs, we rattled down Nassau Street at a very respectable pace for harriers. Street after street we passed, and at last I perceived we had got clear of the city, and were leaving the long line of lamp-lights behind us. The night was now pitch dark. I could not see any thing whatever. The quick clattering of the wheels, the sharp crack of the postilion's whip, or the still sharper tone of his 'gee hup,' showed me we were going at a tremendous pace, had I not even had the experience afforded by the frequent visits my head paid to the roof of the chaise, so often as we bounded over a stone, or splashed through a hollow. Dark and gloomy as it was, I constantly let down the

window, and with half my body protruded, endeavoured to catch a glimpse of the 'chaise'; but nothing could I see. The rain now fell in actual torrents; and a more miserable night it is impossible to conceive.

About after an hour so spent, he at last came to a check, so sudden and unexpected on my part, that I was nearly precipitated, harlequin fashion, through the front window. Perceiving that we no longer moved, and suspecting that some part of our tackle had given way, I let down the sash, and cried out, 'Well now, my lad, any thing wrong?' My question was, however, unheard; and although, amid the steam arising from the wet and smoking horses, I could perceive several figures indistinctly moving about, I could not distinguish what they were doing, nor what they said. A laugh I certainly did hear, and heartily abused the unfeeling wretch, as I supposed him to be, who was enjoying himself at my disappointment. I again endeavoured to find out what had happened, and called out still louder than before.

'We are at Ra'coole, your honour,' said the boy, approaching the door of the chaise, 'and she's only bent us by half a mile.'

'Who the deuce is she?' said I.

'The mail, your honour, is always a female in Ireland.'

'Then why do you stop now? You're not going to feed, I suppose?'

'Of course not, your honour, it's little feeding troubles these bastes, any how, but they tell me the road is so heavy we'll never take the chaise over the next stage without leaders.'

'Without leaders!' said I. 'Pooh! my good fellow, no humbugging, four horses for a light post-chaise and no luggage; come get up, and no nonsense.' At this moment a man approached the window with a lantern in his hand, and so strongly represented the dreadful state of the roads from the late rains—the length of the stage—the frequency of accidents, latterly from under-horsing, &c. &c., that I yielded a reluctant assent, and ordered out the leaders, comforting myself the while, that considering the inside fare of the coach I made such efforts to overtake, was under a pound, and that time was no object to me, I certainly was paying somewhat dearly for my character for resolution."

After a long journey farther, "At last the altered sound of the wheels gave notice of our approach to a town, and after about twenty minutes' rattling over the pavement, we entered what I supposed, correctly, to be Naas. Here I had long since determined my pursuit should cease. The arrival of a chaise and four at a small country town inn, suggests to the various employes therein any thing rather than the traveller in pursuit of the mail; and so the moment I arrived, I was assailed with innumerable proffers of horses, supper, bed, &c. My anxious query was thrice repeated in vain, 'When did the coach pass?'

'The mail,' replied the landlord at length. 'Is it the down mail?'

Not understanding the technical, I answered, 'Of course not the Down—the Kilkenny and Cork mail.'

'From Dublin, sir?'

'Yes, from Dublin.'

'Not arrived yet, sir, nor will it for three quarters of an hour; they never leave Dublin till a quarter past seven; that is, in fact, half-past, and their time here is twenty minutes to eleven.'

'Why, you stupid son of a boot-top, we have been posting on all night like the wind, and all this time the coach has been ten miles behind us.'

'Well, we've eoted them any how,' said the urchin.' One would have thought it enough of mischance for once in the coaching way, to have been laughed at by a rascal of a post-boy, and compelled, for his benefit and that of his confederates on the road, to post on with four horses, in the vain hope of overtaking what was all the time behind; but Mr *Lorrequer's* misadventures were not yet over, and we only stop the course of the narrative to inform the reader, that the Dr Finucane, afterwards mentioned, was a mighty pleasant, jolly, fighting Irishman, once on a time surgeon to the North Cork Militia, with whom it had been our hero's fortune formerly to get acquainted. This being premised, our readers are to suppose the mail at length come up, and *Lorrequer* safely lodged inside of it, secure from the storm of the night, and with one unknown person for a companion, about whom the guard could tell nothing save that he was "a real queer chap," who would fain have had the whole inside seats to himself, and had two paper parcels with him, over which he seemed to watch like a hawk. After getting into the coach, where all was pitch dark, *Lorrequer* made the remark that "the night was severe."

"Mighty severe," briefly and half crustily replied the unknown, with a richness of brogue that might have stood for a certificate of baptism in Cork or its vicinity.

"And a bad road too, sir," said I, remembering my lately accomplished stage.

"That's the reason I always go armed," said the unknown, clinking at the same moment something like the barrel of a pistol.

Wondering somewhat at his readiness to mistake my meaning, I felt disposed to drop any further effort to draw him out, and was about to address myself to sleep, as comfortably as I could.

'I'll jist trouble ye to lean aff that little parcel there, sir,' said he, as he displaced from its position beneath my elbow, one of the paper packages the guard had already alluded to.

In complying with this rather gruff demand, one of my pocket pistols, which I carried in my breast pocket,

fell out upon his knee, upon which he immediately started, and asked hurriedly, 'And are you armed too?'

'Why, yes,' said I, laughingly; 'men of my trade seldom go without something of this kind.'

'I was just thinking that same,' said the traveller,

with a half sigh to himself. Why he should or should not have thought so, I never troubled myself to canvass, and was once more settling myself in my corner, when I was startled by a very melancholy groan, which seemed to come from the bottom of my companion's heart.

'Are you ill, sir?' said I, in a voice of some anxiety.

'You may say that,' replied he, 'if you knew who you were talking to—although may be you've heard enough of me, though you never saw me till now.'

'Without having that pleasure even yet,' said I, 'it would grieve me to think you should be ill in the coach.'

'May be it might,' briefly replied the unknown, with a species of meaning in his words I could by no means understand. 'Did ye never hear tell of Barney Doyle?' said he.

'Not to my recollection.'

'Then I'm Barney,' said he, 'that's in all the newspapers in the metropolis; I'm seventeen weeks in Jervis-street hospital, and four in the Lunatic, and the devil a better after all. You must be a stranger, I'm thinking, or you'd know me now.'

'Why, I do confess I've only been a few hours in Ireland for the last six months.'

'Ay, that's the reason; I knew you would not be fond of travelling with me, if you knew who it was.'

'Why, really,' said I, beginning at the moment to fathom some of the hints of my companion, 'I did not anticipate the pleasure of meeting you.'

'It's pleasure ye call it; then there's no accountin' for tastes, as Dr Colles said, when he saw me bite Cusack Rooney's thumb off.'

'Bite a man's thumb off?' said I, in a horror.

'Ay,' said he with a kind of fiendish animation, 'in one chop; I wish you'd see how I scattered the consultation; begad, they didn't wait to ax for a fee.'

Upon my soul, a very pleasant vicinity, thought I.

'And may I ask, sir,' said I, in a very mild and soothing tone of voice, 'may I ask the reason for this singular propensity of yours?'

'There it is now, my dear,' said he, laying his hand upon my knee familiarly, 'that's just the very thing they can't make out; Colles says it's all the cerebellum, ye see, that's inflamed and combusted, and some of the others think it's the spine; and more, the muscles; but my real impression is, the devil a bit they know about it at all.'

'And have they no name for the malady?' said I.

'Oh sure enough they have a name for it.'

'And, may I ask —'

'Why, I think you'd better not, because ye see, maybe I might be troublesome to ye in the night, though I'll not, if I can help it; and it might be uncomfortable to you to be here, if I was to get one of the fits.'

'One of the fits! Why, it's not possible, sir,' said I, 'you would travel in a public conveyance in the state you mention; your friends surely would not permit it!'

'Why, if they *knew*, perhaps,' silyly responded the interesting invalid, 'if they *knew*, they might not exactly like it; but, ye see, I escaped only last night, and there'll be a fine hubbub in the morning, when they find I'm off; though I'm thinking Rooney's barking by this time.'

'Rooney barking, why, what does that mean?'

'They always bark for a day or two after they're bit, if the infection comes first from the dog.'

'You are surely not speaking of hydrophobia?' said I, my hair actually bristling with horror and consternation.

'Ayn't I?' replied he; 'may be you've guessed it though.'

'And have you the malady on you at present?' said I, trembling for the answer.

'This is the ninth day since I took to biting,' said he gravely, perfectly unconscious, as it appeared, of the terror such information was calculated to convey.

'And with such a propensity, sir, do you think yourself warranted in travelling in a public coach, exposing others —'

'You'd better not raise your voice that way,' quietly responded he; 'if I'm roused, it'll be worse for ye, that's all.'

'Well but,' said I, moderating my zeal, 'is it exactly prudent, in your present delicate state, to undertake a journey?'

'Ah,' said he, with a sigh, 'I've been longing to see the fox-hounds throw off, near Kilkenny; these three weeks I've been thinking of nothing else; but I'm not sure how my nerves will stand the cry; I might be troublesome.'

'Upon my soul,' thought I, 'I shall not select that morning for my debut in the field.'

'I hope, sir, there's no river or water-course on this road—any thing else I can, I hope, control myself against; but water—running water particularly—makes me troublesome.'

Well knowing what he meant by the latter phrase, I felt the cold perspiration settling on my forehead, as I remembered that we must be within about ten or twelve miles of Leighlin Bridge, where we should have to pass a very wide river. I strictly concealed this fact from him, however, and gave him to understand that there was not a well, brook, or rivulet, for forty miles on either side of us. He now sank into a kind of moody

\* William Curry, Jun. and Co., Dublin.

allence, broken occasionally by a low muttering noise, as if speaking to himself. What this might portend, I knew not—but thought it better, under all circumstances, not to disturb him. How comfortable my present condition was, I need scarcely remark—sitting opposite to a lunatic, with a pair of pistols in his possession—who had already avowed his consciousness of his tendency to do mischief, and his inability to master it; all this in the dark, and in the narrow limits of a mail-coach, where there was scarcely room for defence, and no possibility of escape. How heartily I wished myself back in the coffee-room at Morrison's, with my poor friend Tom!—ay, even the outside of the coach, if I could only reach it, would, under present circumstances, be a glorious alternative to my existing misfortune. What were rain and storm, thunder and lightning, compared with the chances that awaited me here!—wet through I should inevitably be, but then I had not yet contracted the horror of moisture my friend opposite laboured under. 'Ha! what is that—is it possible he can be asleep—is it really a snore! Heaven grant that little snort be not what the medical people call a premonitory symptom—if so, he'll be in upon me now in no time. Ah, there it is again; he must be asleep surely; now then is my time or never.' With these words, muttered to myself, and a heart throbbing almost audibly at the risk of his awakening, I slowly let down the window of the coach, and stretching forth my hand, turned the handle cautiously and slowly; I next disengaged my legs, and by a long continuous effort of creeping—which I had learned perfectly once, when practising to go as a box constrictor to a fancy ball—I withdrew myself from the seat, and reached the step, when I muttered something very like a thanksgiving to providence for my rescue. With little difficulty I now climbed up beside the guard, whose astonishment at my appearance was indeed considerable—that any man should prefer the out to the inside of a coach, in such a night, was rather remarkable; but that the person so doing should be totally unprovided with a box-coat, or other similar protection, argued something so strange, that I doubt not, if he were to decide upon the applicability of the statute of lunacy to a traveller in the mail, the palm would certainly have been awarded to me, and not to my late companion. Well, on we rolled; and heavily as the rain poured down, so relieved did I feel at my change of position, that I soon fell fast asleep, and never awoke till the coach was driving up Patrick Street. Whatever solace to my feelings reaching the outside of the coach might have been attended with at night, the pleasure I experienced on awaking was really not unalloyed. More dead than alive, I sat a mass of wet clothes, like nothing under heaven except it be that morsel of black and spongy wet cotton at the bottom of a school-boy's ink bottle, saturated with rain, and the black dye of my coat. My hat, too, had contributed its share of colouring matter, and several long black streaks coursed down my 'wrinkled front,' giving me very much the air of an Indian warrior, who had got the first priming of his war paint. I certainly must have been a useful object, were I only to judge from the faces of the waiters as they gazed on me when the coach drew up at Rice and Walsh's hotel. Cold, wet, and weary as I was, my curiosity to learn more of my late agreeable companion was strong as ever within me—perhaps stronger, from the sacrifices his acquaintance had exacted from me. Before, however, I had disengaged myself from the pile of trunks and carpet bags I had surrounded myself with, he had got out of the coach, and all I could catch a glimpse of was the back of a little short man, in a kind of grey upper coat, and long galligaskins on his legs. He carried his two bundles under his arm, and stepped nimbly up the steps of the hotel, without ever turning his head to either side.

'Don't fancy you shall escape me now, my good friend,' I cried out, as I sprang from the roof to the ground with one jump, and hurried after the great unknown into the coffee-room. By the time I reached it he had approached the fire, on the table near which, having deposited the mysterious paper parcels, he was now busily engaged in divesting himself of his greatcoat; his face was still turned from me, so that I had time to appear employed in divesting myself of my wet drapery before he perceived me; at last the coat was unbuttoned, the gaiters followed, and throwing them carelessly on a chair, he tucked up the skirts of his coat, and spreading himself comfortably, *à l'Anglais*, before the fire, displayed to my wondering and stupefied gaze the pleasant features of Doctor Finucane.

'Why, Doctor—Doctor Finucane,' cried I, 'is this possible! Were you then really the inside in the mail last night!'

'Not a doubt of it, Mr Lorrequer; and may I make bould to ask, were you the outside!'

'Then what, may I beg to know, did you mean by your confounded story about Barney Doyle, and the hydrophobia, and Cusack Rooney's thumb—eh!'

'Oh, by the pigs,' said Finucane, 'this will be the death of me; and it was you that I drove outside in all the rain last night! Oh, it will kill Father Malachi outright with laughing, when I tell him; and he burst out into a fit of merriment that nearly induced me to break his head with the poker.'

'Am I to understand, then, Mr Finucane, that this practical joke of yours was contrived for my benefit, and for the purpose of holding me up to the ridicule of your confounded acquaintances?'

'Nothing of the kind, upon my conscience,' said Fin, drying his eyes, and endeavouring to look sorry

and sentimental. 'If I had had only the least suspicion in life that it was you, upon my oath I'd not have had the hydrophobia at all, and, to tell you the truth, you were not the only one frightened—you alarmed me quite as much.'

'I alarmed you! Why, how can that be?'

'Why, the real affair is this: I was bringing these two packages of notes down to my cousin Callaghan's bank in Cork—fifteen thousand pounds—no less; and when you came into the coach at Naas, after driving there with your four horses, I thought it was all up with me. The guard just whispered in my ear, that he saw you look at the priming of your pistols before getting in; and faith I said four paters, and a hail Mary, before you'd count five. Well, when you got seated, the thought came into my mind that maybe, highwayman as you were, you would not like dying a natural death, more particularly if you were an Irishman; and so I trumped up that long story about the hydrophobia, and the gentleman's thumb, and devil knows what besides; and while I was telling it, the cold perspiration was running down my head and face, for every time you stirred, I said to myself, now he'll do it. Two or three times, do you know, I was going to offer you ten shillings in the pound, and spare my life; and once, heaven forgive me, I thought it would not be a bad plan to shoot you 'by mistake,' do you perceive!'

'Why, upon my word, I am very much obliged to you for your excessively kind intentions; but really I feel you have done quite enough for me on the present occasion. But, come now, doctor, I must get to bed, and before I go, promise me two things: to dine with us to-day at the mess, and not to mention a syllable of what occurred last night—it tells, believe me, very badly for both; so, keep the secret, for if these fellows of ours ever get hold of it, I may sell out, or quit the army; I'll never hear the end of it.'

'Never fear, my boy, trust me. I'll dine with you, and you're as safe as a church-house.'

But the merry Doctor did not keep his word, and Lorrequer was laughed at consumedly. Of such incidents as these the Confessions are full, and it may well be believed, therefore, that they are very entertaining as a whole.

#### SPIDER SILK.

SOME years ago, the Society of Arts conferred one of their honorary medals on a gentleman of the name of Rolt, for obtaining silk from the garden spider, *aranea diadema*. This is the insect whose webs in autumn are so conspicuous on the surface of shrubs, and in other situations. On allowing one of these animals to crawl over his hand, Mr Rolt found that it drew a thread with it wherever it went. He likewise, without any difficulty, wound some of this thread over his hand, finding that the spider continued spinning while the thread was winding up. On this hint he connected a small reel with the steam-engine of the factory in which he was occupied, and, putting it in motion, at the rate of 150 feet per minute, found that the spider would thus continue to afford an unbroken thread during from three to five minutes. The specimen of this silk which Mr Rolt presented to the society, was wound off from twenty-four spiders in about two hours. Its length was estimated at 18,000 feet; its colour was white, and its lustre of metallic brilliancy, owing, probably, to its great opacity. He did not attempt to combine two or more filaments into one winding, nor to form it into thread by throwing. The thread of the garden spider is so much finer than that of the silkworm, that the united strength of five of the former is, according to Mr Rolt, equal only to one of the latter; and assuming that the weight is in proportion to the strength, and that a spider will yield twice a-year a thread 750 feet in length, while that produced by a single silkworm is 1900 feet, it follows that the produce of one silkworm is equal to that of 6.3 spiders. "Now," says the Report in the society's Transactions, "as on an average it takes about 3500 silkworms to produce a pound of silk, it would take about 22,000 spiders to produce an equal quantity. Besides, spiders are not so easily confined as silkworms, and whenever two come in contact, a battle ensues, which ends in the destruction of the weaker one. Spiders kept for silk must therefore be each in separate dens or cells; and the apparatus contrived by Mr Rolt for this purpose, although very ingenious and well adapted to carry on a course of experiments with a hundred or two, would manifestly be wholly inapplicable to any purpose of commercial utility."

But a gentleman of Languedoc went a great deal farther than the English experimenter, for he established a manufacture of spider silk, and so far succeeded that he made gloves and stockings from the fibres of the web. The great impediment, however, to his complete success, was the implacable hostility of these insects to each other. Reaumur placed 5000 in fifty different cells, and the larger destroyed the smaller, till only one or two were left in each cell. But there is a species of spider noticed by Dr Walsh in his travels in Brazil, to which this objection does

not apply. Here the insect was not solitary but gregarious; and colonies of more than 100 occupied the same web. The doctor's account of it is as follows:—"Among the insects is an enormous spider, which I did not observe elsewhere. In passing through an opening between some trees, I felt my head entangled in some obstructions, and on withdrawing it, my light straw hat remained behind. When I looked up, I saw it suspended in the air, entangled in the meshes of an immense cobweb, which was drawn like a veil of thick gauze across the opening, and was expanded from branch to branch of the opposite trees, as large as a sheet, ten or twelve feet in diameter. The whole of this space was covered with spiders of the same species (*aranea maculata*) but different sizes; some of them, when their legs were expanded, forming a circle of six or seven inches in circumference. They were particularly distinguished by bright spots. The cords composing the web were of a glossy yellow, like the fibres of silk-worms, and equally strong. I wound off several on a card, and they extended to the length of three or four yards." There is here a fair field for the Brazilian speculator. The spider's web, which, in single threads, could support a straw hat, must be much stronger and tougher than the frail tissues of our own country, and might certainly be manufactured into articles of wearing apparel, if a proper quantity of it could be obtained. As these gigantic spiders of Brazil are not eaters of their own species, large colonies of them might be maintained with ease, and, we doubt not, advantage, to the experimenter.

We may here conveniently introduce some particulars, by an attentive observer, of the domestic spider, and its great enemy, another spider of a larger size:—One of the latter genus not being able to spin any more web, came to invade the property of his smaller neighbour; a terrible conflict immediately ensued, in which victory seemed to incline to the side of the usurper, for the industrious spider was obliged to take refuge in his hole. After this the conqueror employed every method it could use to draw the other from its retreat: at one time it appeared to go away, but at another returned again quickly, until, at length, seeing that all its artifices were vain, it began to destroy the web of the vanquished. This occasioned another battle, in which the honest and industrious spider had the good fortune to slay its antagonist. Thus placed in peaceable possession of what was no more than its own property, it spent three days in repairing the breaches of its web, without taking any nourishment. Some time afterwards a large blue fly fell into the web, and began struggling violently to escape from its meshes. The spider at first let it alone, but finding that it was too strong for the snare, it came out of its hole, and in less than a minute so completely enveloped the fly in the coils of a new net, that its escape became impossible. This was like the windfall of a gigantic whale to the Esquimaux; and it continued to subsist the spider for a whole week. One day a wasp was thrown into the web; according to custom the spider ran towards the object which had disturbed it, but on observing the terrible enemy which it had to deal with (for spiders never catch Tartars, if they can avoid it), it soon broke all the strings that confined the wasp, and so set it at liberty. But in doing this the web had become irreparably injured; it was abandoned like an old house that is no longer tenable with safety to the possessor, and a new one was commenced, and finished in the usual time. To see how many webs a spider is capable of furnishing, this new web was destroyed; it made another, which was likewise demolished: it now seemed exhausted, for it span no more. The artifices which it then used, although deprived of its chief protection, were surprising. It drew up its claws like a ball, and remained for four hours immovable, yet always on its guard: but when a fly approached near enough, it instantaneously darted on it, and seldom missed its prey. At length, as if disgusted with this sort of life, it determined to invade the possessions of another spider. Accordingly, it advanced to the attack of a neighbouring fortification, but meeting with a vigorous resistance, it was repulsed. Far from being discouraged by this disappointment, it invested another, as military men say, and continued a close siege for three days, at the end of which time the beleaguered insect was slain, and its fortress taken possession of by the enemy. This spider lived for three years, and annually changed its skin like the snake. By way of experiment (it was a cruel one, however), one of its claws was repeatedly removed from the leg, and as often replaced by a new one in two or three days.

But it appears that insects not only yield the material of which cloth is manufactured, but, under certain circumstances, can manufacture it themselves. Some years ago there were exhibited to the Academy of Sciences at Paris, specimens of a very peculiar species of cloth fabricated by insects. Mr Habensbrot of Munich, having observed the larvae of a butterfly called *tinea punctata*, or *tinea padilla*, to be in the habit of constructing over themselves a tent of great strength, conceived the idea of setting them to work on models prepared by himself. The models were of paper suspended from the ceiling, and lines were drawn on them with oil, to which the insects have a natural antipathy, to regulate the form of the tissue, and limit the operations of the tiny manufacturers. An air balloon, four feet high, weighing only five grains, and yet impervious to air, was constructed in this manner; also a shawl, an ell square, which, when spread out, was blown into the air by a puff of the breath, and had the appearance



of a thin vapour floating on the breeze. Such gossamer texture would afford but a poor protection in this country; but the experiment is extremely interesting. We know not, however, whether any thing has come of it, as Johnson would say.

#### BOWRING'S MINOR MORALS—MAHOMET ALI.

DR BOWRING some years ago published two small volumes, under the title of "Minor Morals," in which, through the medium of conversations with his children, he illustrated a number of the familiar virtues by stories and anecdotes, chiefly picked up by himself from observations of real life, in the course of his travels. He has now added a *third volume*,\* in which, taking as before the name of Howard, he gives his children conversational sketches of many things which he observed in his recent travels in Egypt and the countries around the Levant. With respect to this new volume, the title strikes us as inapplicable, seeing that very few of the sketches illustrate morals larger or smaller, but are simply very pleasant recollections of an intelligent traveller. Not to quarrel, however, with so external a matter as the name, let us give the author his due praise for the solid merits of his work, which is not only calculated to impress our British youth with some lively general notions of the East, but contains much matter that will be new to more grave inquirers, particularly with reference to the superstitions of the Orientals. The notices which Dr Bowring here gives respecting the *Djins*, or wicked genii of the east, the *Peris*, the vampires, and the belief in magic, are, we fairly confess, in a great measure new to us, and extremely interesting. We prefer, nevertheless, as a specimen of Dr Bowring's book, a portion of his conversation respecting the present viceroy, or perhaps we ought rather now to say sovereign, of Egypt, with whom the author has had the benefit of much familiar intercourse:—

"Papa! you have seen much of Mahomet Ali Pacha; will you tell us something about him? Where was he born?" was Arthur's request to Mr Howard when next they all met together.

"He was born at Cavalla in Roumelia," was his father's answer, "and he told me he was the youngest of sixteen children. He was much indulged by his father and mother, and was a great favourite of his brothers and sisters. He once said to me, 'Do not wonder if I am sometimes impatient and want to have my own way. I was never used to contradiction. I have scarcely ever known misfortune. I was born under a smiling star, and that star has smiled upon me all my life through.'"

"But has not Mahomet Ali committed a great many cruel deeds—did he not invite all the Mamelukes to a festival, and cause them to be murdered?" inquired George.

"And I have heard," added Arthur, "that one of them sprang, with his fine Arab horse, over the battlements of the high citadel of Cairo, and so saved his life."

"What you have heard is true," said Mr Howard, "and that Mahomet Ali or his friends urge for his justification, is, that the Mamelukes were plotting against him, and would have destroyed him had he not destroyed them. \* \* I should tell you that Mahomet Ali was forty-six years old before he had learned either to read or to write. This he told me himself. I have heard that he was taught by his favourite wife. But he is fond of reading now; and one day, when I entered his divan unannounced, I found him quite alone, with his spectacles on, reading a Turkish volume, which he was much enjoying, while a considerable pile of books were by his side. "It is a pleasant relief," he said, "from public business; I was reading some amusing Turkish stories" (probably the Arabian Nights); "and now let us talk—what have you to tell me?" There is a great deal of sagacity in Mahomet Ali's conversation, particularly when he knows or discovers, as he usually does, the sort of information which his visitor is most able to give. He discourses with engineers, about mechanical improvements—with military men, on the art of war—with sea-officers, on ship-building and naval manœuvres—with travellers, on the countries they have visited—with politicians, on public affairs. He very willingly talks of foreign countries, and princes and statesmen, and is in the habit of mingling in the conversation all sorts of anecdotes about himself, and the events connected with his history. His phrases are often poetical, and he, like most Orientals, frequently introduces proverbs and imagery. I heard him once say, speaking of the agriculture of Egypt, "When I came to this country, I only scratched it with a pin; I have now succeeded in cultivating it with a hoe; but soon I will have a plough passing over the whole land." You asked me, George, if he were not a cruel prince! and that he certainly is not, for many a generous deed has he done, and seldom will it be found that the reign of a Turkish sovereign is so little stained with blood."

"We like to hear of acts of clemency," said one of the children; "tell us of Mahomet Ali's."

"When I was at Cairo, a number of Levantine merchants had got deeply, and I fear dishonestly, in debt to the pacha. Payment had been urged in every possible way, but in vain. At last the pacha got impatient, for the amount was large (exceeding £100,000 sterling), and he directed them to be seized, sent to the galleys for life, and all their property to be confiscated. It happened that an Englishman of distinction and myself were applied to by their distressed families to intercede with the pacha, and to implore mercy, less on account of the imprudent debtors than of their numerous families. We urged the excess of punishment, with reference to the offence, falling upon the innocent more heavily than on the guilty. We talked of the gentle quality of mercy—blessing the giver as much as the receiver—and the old man's heart was touched, and he forgave the debtors."

"I have heard you say that Mahomet Ali is a very interesting person in his own family; now let us all know something of his private character," said Mrs Howard.

"I do not deny," answered Mr Howard, "that I feel a great interest in Mahomet Ali, and the more so because I have had the advantage of seeing him with his children and grandchildren around him, and of talking with him about domestic matters. In the East it is very difficult to learn much about the private concerns of any Turk, and still less of those of men of high station. Mahomet Ali's great pride is Ibrahim Pacha; a victorious leader is always an object of admiration among Mussulmans, and Ibrahim Pacha's career has been one of brilliant military success. His father is fond of talking of his first-born son and intended successor. "I did not know him," he said; "I had not an unbounded confidence in him for many, many years; no, not till his beard was almost as long as my own, and even changing its colour," said the pacha to me, "but now I can thoroughly trust him." On the part of Ibrahim Pacha, though in rank above his father (for the Pacha of the Holy Cities is the first Pacha of the Ottoman Empire), there is always the utmost deference to Mahomet Ali's will. In the most difficult circumstances of his life he has always referred to his renowned sire for advice; and whenever he has been pressed by the representatives of the great powers of Europe, he has invariably answered, that he should abide by the instructions he received from his father. Of the sons of Mahomet Ali, Toussoun, the second, was long the favourite. He was a prince of a generous, not to say extravagant disposition; and when on one occasion he was reproached by his father for his prodigality, he answered, "It may be well for you to be economical, who were not born what you are, but I am the son of Mahomet Ali Pacha, and the son of a pacha must be liberal." His father smiled, the answer flattered his sense of dignity, and he upbraided Toussoun no more. Not long after, Toussoun died of the plague. A third son, Ismail, was murdered by the blacks in Sennar, the hut in which he was being surrounded by brushwood, set on fire, and he perished in the flames."

"Had they no motive—the blacks—had he done nothing to deserve so cruel a fate?" inquired Edith.

"He had invaded their country, and awakened their animosity, and, looking on him as an intruder, they thus satiated their revenge."

"And what happened in consequence?" asked George.

"The sheikh, or leader, at Shendy, where the deed was committed, was afterwards seized, and all the inhabitants who were supposed to have taken any part in the assassination, were put to death."

"How shocking!" exclaimed Edith. \* \*

"I have been very happy in my children," Mahomet Ali said to me one day; "there is not one of them who does not treat me with the utmost deference and respect; except," he added, laughing outright, "that little fellow, the last and the least of all, Mahomet Ali."

He was then a boy of five or six years old, called by his father's name—the son of his old age—his Benjamin—his best beloved.

"I see how it is," I said; "your highness spoils the boy. You encourage the little rogue." Mahomet Ali laughed again—it was an acknowledgment of a little paternal weakness.

Not long after, I was in the palace of Shoubra; it was on a Friday, the Mussulman Sabbath, when the pacha is in the habit of receiving all his family.

I found him in his divan. He was surrounded by all his sons and grandsons who were then residing at Cairo. He had been listening to the accounts of their studies—of their amusements and their employments. Abbas Pacha, the eldest son of Toussoun Pacha, sat next his grandfather, and the rest of the family were seated on chairs, according to their ranks and ages. After some conversation, Mahomet Ali told his descendants that they might now withdraw. One after another they rose, knelt before him, kissed the hem of his garment, and retired. Little Mahomet Ali came last; he was dressed in military costume, with a small golden-eased scimitar dangling at his side. He advanced towards his father—looked in his face; he saw the accustomed, the involuntary smile; and when he was about a yard from the pacha, instead of bending or saluting him, he turned on his heels, and laughingly scampered away, like a young colt.

"I see how it is," said I to Mahomet Ali.

The old man shook his head—looked grave for a moment—another smile passed over his countenance; "Peki, peki!" said he, in a low tone; "well, well!" But I certainly did not like his highness the worse for what I had just witnessed."

#### DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE.

Few persons who have not minutely investigated the subject possess any adequate notion of the difficulties encountered by missionaries in their endeavour to Christianise heathen countries, particularly India; and ignorance in this respect has produced no little injury to the missionary cause. Among other difficulties in the way, the following are given by Mr Malcolm in his "Travels in Burmah," recently published:—

"The bigotry, superstition, and sensuality of the heathen, their want of early training in the proper theory of religion, the absence of a correct moral sense, and similar disadvantages of great magnitude, not felt by ministers in a Christian land, will not be insisted upon, because they equally impeded the apostles, who nevertheless had great success. I intend only to name those which are peculiar to modern missionaries.

1. An imperfect knowledge of the language of the people.

Scarcely one missionary in twenty has become able to preach with entire fluency, and probably never one had such a knowledge of the language as inspiration gave. A great amount of preaching has been done through interpreters, and these often unconverted heathen, who could not give full force to themes they did not comprehend. Few can acquire such mastery of a foreign tongue as to express their thoughts with the glow and intensity of a native, even when the idiom and structure of the language is thoroughly understood.

An experienced missionary in Bengal assured me that on an average not one half of the sermons of missionaries who undertake to preach is understood. Dr Carey, in a letter of August 1809, states, that after, by years of study, he thought he had fully mastered the Bengalee, and had then preached it two full years, he discovered that he was not understood! Yet Dr C.'s teachers flattered him that he was understood perfectly. This is a very common deception of pundits and moonshies. In the opinion of one of the most experienced missionaries in the Madras presidency, not one missionary in ten, out of those who live the longest, ever gets the language so as to be generally understood, except when declaring the simplest truths. This is a difficulty not to be removed. Merchants and traders may easily acquire the vocabulary of traffic and social life, and so do missionaries. They may go farther, and be able to read or understand literary and historical subjects. But to have the ready command of words, on abstract theological subjects, and all the nice shades of meaning requisite to discuss accurately mental and moral subjects, can only be the work of many years, of intense study, and great practice.

2. There is a still greater difficulty, in the poverty of the languages themselves.

For terms which are of primary importance in religious discourse, words must often be used which are either unmeaning, or foreign to the purpose, or inaccurate. It is not easy to exhibit this difficulty in its true magnitude to such as have not mixed with heathen. A few examples may, however, make the argument intelligible. Words equivalent to God, Lord, &c., must, in various languages, be those which the heathen apply to their idols; for there are no others. In Tamil, the word *pádem* (sin) signifies only 'exposure to evil,' or simply 'evil,' whether natural or moral, and may be applied to a beast as well as a man. The word *padesuttam* (holiness) means 'cleanness.' *Regeneration* is understood by a Hindu or Buddhist to mean 'another birth' in this world, or 'transmigration.' The purposes of God they understand to be 'fate.' The word used in Bengalee for holy (dharma), sometimes means 'merit' acquired by acts of religious worship, and sometimes 'that which is agreeable to rule or custom.' When the compound word *Holy Ghost* is translated, it becomes 'Spirit of rule,' or some phrase not more intelligible. In the Episcopal Liturgy in Bengalee, it is rendered 'Spirit of existence' (sadatma); and Mr Yates, in his new version of the Scriptures, uses the word *pabitra*, 'clean.' This last, while it avoids the hazard of conveying a wrong idea, and seems to be the best rendering, is yet evidently imperfect. In Siamese, the word most used for sin (tót) means either 'guilt,' or the 'punishment of guilt,' or simply 'exposure to punishment.' The best word the missionaries can get for holy, is *boreasut*, 'purified,' when people are spoken of; and *sakut*, or 'Spirit having power because of sanctity,' when the Holy Ghost is meant. There is no Siamese word equivalent to *repent*; and a phrase is used signifying 'to establish the mind anew,' or 'make new resolves.' In Burman, there is no term equivalent to our *heaven*, and a word meaning 'sky,' or more properly 'space,' is used; nor any word for *angel*, and the rendering of that term has to be 'sky-messenger;' nor any word for *condemn*, except the circumlocution 'decide according to demerit, or sin;' nor any word for *conscience*, *thank*, &c. &c. I might add scores of such cases, given me by missionaries. There is scarcely a theological term not subject to this difficulty.

For a multitude of our terms there is no word at all. Among these are not only theological terms, such as sanctification, gospel, evangelist, church, atonement, devil, &c., but the names of implements, animals, customs, clothing, and many other things, of which ignorant and remote tribes have never heard, and for which entirely new terms must be coined.

Let a man imagine how he would be embarrassed in reading a book, or hearing a discourse, in which he constantly met with Greek or Arabic terms, and words used in a sense differing more or less from that in which he understands them, and these often the principal terms in

\* William Tait, Edinburgh; Simpkin, Marshall, and Co., London.

the sentence, and he may form some conception of this difficulty. Even the native assistant, preaching in his mother tongue, is not properly understood; for he must use these terms.

3. Want of familiarity with the system and sacred books to be encountered, and with national prejudices and modes of thinking.

For exposing with freedom, and attacking with power, a popular belief, these are eminent advantages. Hence, in part, the superior success of native preachers. The apostles were native preachers, almost wherever they went; and we see how largely they used their intimate knowledge of the national religion and habits of thinking, not only in disputations, but in formal discourses and epistles. Many years must elapse before a missionary can attain this power, and then only by the wearisome perusal of many volumes of disgusting legends, as well as contact with natives in many ways, and for a long period."

#### INFANT EDUCATION.

THE following copy of a letter from Dr Andrew Combe has been handed to us by the gentleman in this town to whom it was addressed. It was obtained, of course, for a special purpose, but its purport is of general interest:—

"In reply to the queries contained in your letter, I have no hesitation in stating my conviction, that the confinement of children for several consecutive hours in crowded class-rooms is highly injurious to their health, and often lays the foundation for a delicacy of constitution, especially in girls, which no subsequent care can entirely remove. To state why this result follows, would be to recapitulate the expositions already given in my works on physiology and dietetics, and is therefore unnecessary.

The only plan by which this evil can be obviated, is by admitting only one limited class at a time, to which the teacher's attention should be wholly devoted for one hour or thereabouts, and having the room thoroughly ventilated before another class is admitted.

As the result of much attention to the subject, I may here express my decided conviction, that the progress made by pupils thus treated will be greater, and far more pleasing to themselves, than where they are confined double the time, as in ordinary schools; and I have the direct testimony of several teachers and parents to the same effect.

As you have asked my opinion on these points, I may be allowed to refer to another, which is also of great importance to bodily health and mental activity. I allude to the injury done at present by sending children to school for so many consecutive hours, that they are deprived of the nourishment which their growing organisation imperatively requires, till frequently three or four hours beyond the time at which nature demands it. In several instances I have seen health restored in infirm children, merely by allowing them an hour for an early dinner, instead of obliging them to wait till four or five o'clock, when their school hours are over. Another great disadvantage of the present system of long confinement, is the impossibility, especially in winter, of getting that ample exercise in the open air, without which neither mind nor body can thrive. There will be difficulties on the part of parents as well as of teachers in obviating these errors, but I mention them as eminently deserving of attention in every improved plan of elementary education." The most eminent of the faculty in Glasgow have expressed their concurrence in Dr Combe's opinion.—*Scottish Pilot*.

#### A POTTEEN SMUGGLER'S WIFE.

A man who was known to have a large mountain farm and extensive homestead in these hills, was observed very frequently to ride into the town of B—; and he never made his appearance without a woman, supposed to be his wife, jogging steadily and uprightly on a pillion behind him. He was tall and gaunt in look; she large and rotund, and encumbered, as is the mode of all country wives, with a multitude of petticoats: they always rode into the yard of a man who kept a public-house; and before they alighted off their horse, the gate was carefully shut. It was known, moreover, that this publican acted as factor for this farmer in the sale of his butter; and so for a length of time things went on in a quiet and easy way, until one day it so happened (as indeed it is very common for idlers in a very idle country town to stand making remarks on the people as they come by) that the guager, the innkeeper, and a squireen, were lounging away their day, when the farmer slowly paced by, with his everlasting wife behind him. "Well," says the squireen, "of all the women I ever saw bumping on a pillion, that lump of a woman sits the awkwardest; she don't sit like a natural born crutcher at all; and do you see how modest she is, what with her flapped-down beaver hat, and all the frills and fallals about her, not an inch of her sweet face is to be seen, no more than an owl from out the ivy. I have a great mind to run up alongside of her, and give her a pinch in the toe, to make old buckram look about her for once." "Oh, let her alone," says the innkeeper; "they're a decent couple from Joyce country. I'll be bound, what makes her sit so stiff is all the eggs she is bringin' in to Mrs O'Mealey, who factors the butter for them." There was, while he said this, a cunning leer about the innkeeper's mouth, as much as to denote that there was, to his knowledge, however he came by it, something mysterious about this said couple; this was not lost on the subtle guager, and he thought it no harm just to try more about the matter; and so he says in a frolicsome way, "Why, then, for curiosity sake, I will just run up to them, and give the mistress a pinch—somewhere; she won't notice me at all in the crowd, and maybe then she'll look up, and we'll see her own purty face." Accordingly, no sooner said than done: he ran over to where the farmer was getting on slowly through the market crowd; and on the side of the pillion to which the woman's back was turned, attempted to give a sly pinch, but he might as well have pinched a pitcher; nor did the woman even lift up her head, or ask "Who is it

that's hurting me?" This emboldened him to give another knock with his knuckles; and this assault he found not opposed, as it should be, by petticoats and flesh, but by what he felt to be petticoats and metal. This is queer, thought the guager: he now was more bold, and with the butt-end of his walking-stick he hit what was so hard, a bang which sounded as if he had struck a tin pot. "Stop here, honest man," cried the guager. "Let my wife alone, will you, before the people?" cried the farmer. "Not till I see what this honest woman is made of," roared the guager. So he pulled, and the farmer dug his heels into his colt to get on; but all would not do: in the struggle down came the wife into the street; and as she fell on the pavement, the whole street rang with the squash, and in a moment there is a gurgling as from a burst barrel, and a strong smelling water comes flowing all about; and flat poor Nora lies, there being an eruption of all her intestines, which flowed down the gutter as like pottchen whisky as eggs are like eggs. The fact was, that our friend from the land of Joyce had got made, by some tinker, a tin vessel with head and body the shape of a woman, and dressed it out as a proper country dame; in this way he carried his darling behind him, and made much of her.—*Otway's Tour in Connaught*.

#### POETRY.

[BY JAMES G. PRINCIPLE.]

The world is full of Poetry—the air  
Is living with its spirit; and the waves  
Dance to the music of its melodies,  
And sparkle in its brightness. Earth is veiled  
And mantled with its beauty; and the walls,  
That close the universe with crystal lin,  
Are eloquent with voices, that proclaim  
The unseen glories of immensity,  
In harmonies, too perfect, and too high,  
For aught but beings of celestial mould,  
And speak to man in one eternal hymn  
Unfading beauty, and unyielding power.

The year leads round the seasons, in a choir  
For ever charming, and for ever new;  
Blending the grand, the beautiful, the gay,  
The mournful, and the tender, in one strain,  
Which steals into the heart, like sounds, that rise  
Far off, in moonlight evenings, on the shore  
Of the wide ocean resting after storms;  
Or tones, that wind around the vaulted roof,  
And pointed arches, and retiring aisles  
Of some old, lonely minster, where the hand  
Skillful, and moved, with passionate love of art,  
Plays o'er the higher keys, and bears aloft  
The peal of bursting thunder, and then calls  
By mellow touches, from the softer tubes,  
Voices of melting tenderness, that blend  
With pure and gentle musings, till the soul,  
Communing with the melody, is borne,  
Rapt, and dissolved in ecstasy, to Heaven.

'Tis not the chime and flow of words, that move  
In measured file, and metrical array;  
'Tis not the union of returning sounds,  
Nor all the pleasing artifice of rhyme,  
And quantity, and accent, that can give  
This all-pervading spirit to the ear,  
Or blend it with the movements of the soul.  
'Tis a mysterious feeling, which combines  
Man with the world around him, in a chain  
Woven of flowers, and dipp'd in sweetness, till  
He tastes the high communion of his thoughts,  
With all existences, in earth and heaven,  
That meet him in the charm of grace and power.  
'Tis not the noisy babble, who displays,  
In studied phrase, and ornate epithet,  
And rounded period, poor and rapid thoughts,  
Which peep from out the cumbrous ornaments  
That overload their littleness. Its words  
Are few, but deep and solemn; and they break  
Fresh from the fount of feeling, and are full  
Of all that passion, which, on Carmel, fired  
The holy prophet, when his lips were coals,  
His language wing'd with terror, as when bolts  
Leap from the brooding tempest, armed with wrath,  
Communion'd to affright us, and destroy.

—The Lyre.

#### HAPPINESS OF ANIMALS AND BIRDS.

It is impossible to view the cheerfulness and happiness of animals and birds without pleasure; the latter, especially, appear to enjoy themselves during the fine weather, in spring and summer, with a degree of hilarity which might be almost envied. It is astonishing how much man might do to lessen the misery of those creatures which are given to him for either food or use, or for adding to his pleasure if he were so disposed; instead of which, he often exercises a degree of wanton tyranny and cruelty over them which cannot be too much deprecated, and for which, no doubt, he will be held one day accountable. Animals are so capable of showing gratitude and affection to those who have been kind to them, that I never see them subjected to ill treatment without feeling the utmost abhorrence of those who are inflicting it. I know many persons who, like myself, take a pleasure in seeing all the animals about them appear happy and contented. Cows will show their pleasure at seeing those who have been kind to them, by moving their ears gently, and putting out their wet noses. My old horse rests his head on the gate with great complacency, when he sees me coming, expecting to receive an apple or a piece of bread. I should even be sorry to see my poultry and pigs get out of my way with any symptoms of fear.—*Jesse's Gleanings*.

#### STRONG DRINK.

If all strong drink were pure, it would, nevertheless, be injurious to the health. It was said by an eminent phy-

siologist, that the frame of each human being can endure a certain number of pulsations; and the quicker those pulsations take place, the sooner their number is exhausted, and the sooner the frame is worn out. To use habitually drink, is like whipping constantly one's horse; at first, it makes him step out quicker, but he soon flags under the constant impulse; he disregards the lash according as he becomes accustomed to it, until, at last, to make him stir, requires constant beating. How different from the horse, who, fed with wholesome food, is allowed to go at his own steady pace, and who, not driven beyond his nature, performs his journey well and freshly!—*Toronto Christian Guardian*.

#### THE CONSCIENTIOUS MIMIC.

In the beginning of the last century, an actor, celebrated for mimicry, was to have been employed by a comic author to take off the person, manner, and singularly awkward delivery of the celebrated Dr Woodward, who was intended to be introduced on the stage in a laughable character. The mimic dressed himself as a countryman, and waited on the doctor with a long catalogue of ailments which he said afflicted his wife. The physician heard with amazement of diseases and pains of the most opposite nature, repeated and redoubled on the wretched patient; for since the actor's greatest wish was to keep Dr Woodward in his company as long as possible, that he might make the more observations on his gestures, he loaded his poor imaginary spouse with every infirmity which had any probable chance of prolonging the interview. At length, having completely accomplished his errand, he drew from his purse a guinea, and with a bow and scrape made an uncouth offer of it. "Put up thy money, poor fellow," cried the doctor; "put up thy money—thou hast need of all thy cash, and all thy patience too, with such a bundle of diseases tied to thy back." The comedian returned to his employer, and related the whole conversation with such true feeling of the physician's character, that the author was convulsed with laughter. But his raptures were soon checked when the mimic told him with emphatic sensibility, that he would sooner die than prostitute his talents to the rendering such genuine humanity a public object of ridicule.—*From a Scrap-Book*.

#### REALITIES OF LIFE.

Realities are seldom the pleasantest parts of life. Hope, memory, and even enjoyments, are more than half imaginative. Every thing is mellowed by distance; and when we come too near, the airy softness is lost, and the hard lines of truth are offered harshly to the eye. Half our sorrows are the breaking of different illusions; sometimes they must be broken; but when without danger to himself or injury to others, man can enrich the scene before him with ideal beauties, he is foolish to examine minutely the objects of which it is composed. The cottage, with its broken thatch and shining piece of water in the foreground, is picturesque and beautiful in a landscape; but what is the reality? The dwelling of misery, decorated with a horse-pond! The splendid pageants that dazzle the lesser children at a theatre are but dirty daubs of paint and tinsel; and it is the same with the stage of the world. It never answers to be behind the scenes.—*Newspaper paragraph, probably from some new work*.

#### WANTS IN AMERICA.

Wanted: A man to lay out crockery. He must be sprack and handy, and balance his own breakage. Wanted: A hardware lad to go South. Wanted: Part of a house in the region of East Broadway, by a family without the least disposition to meddle with other folk's affairs. Wanted: Some bricklayers to go West. Wanted: A satisfactory journeyman in the rush-bottoming line, to go South. Wanted: A grey gelding that can go straight. To save trouble, a hundred dollars will be the figure. Wanted: A good place for a respectable woman, now living at 93, Nineteenth-Street, either as seamstress, laundress, nurse, pastry-cook, confectioner, or companion after the English fashion. £3 This is comprehensive, and merits attention. Wanted: A young woman (the plainer the better), to help a small genteel family in their domestic matters. One without ringleads would be preferred. Wanted: A clerk in a soft store; one who will make business his pleasure, and not pleasure his business, may drop into a good place by applying, &c. Wanted: Twenty-five well-seasoned hands for whaling; ask for Seth Turner, North-wall. Wanted: A coloured girl who has been used to waiting; such an one need not wait long for a good place, provided six hours' sleep per night will satisfy her, and she brings character. Wanted: A situation for a youth, very genteel, whose education has been neglected, but who is stout, and of good address. N. B. He will expect a comfortable salary and decent treatment, and he can walk twenty miles a-day with ease. Wanted: Somebody to do as they would be done by in the care of a house and furniture during a forthcoming six weeks' absence of the proprietor. Sex no object. Wanted: Board and lodging for a lone gentleman where there are no children nor dogs. N. B. His appetite is moderate, and the terms must be moderate also. Wanted: A great number of customers. At Dr Lewis Teuchtwanger's establishment in Courtlandt-street, any number of customers may be instantly accommodated with any quantity of spoons, knives, ladles, forks, figures, cups, speaking trumpets, thimbles, knobs, locks, ventilators, coffin plates, door ditto, pitchers, combs, tobacco boxes, communion services, snuff mugs, muddlers, napkin-rings, strainers, and mugs of all sorts; all manufactured of American silver, and of the very best quality, for cash. Wanted: Five or six smart girls to show off millinery, and make themselves agreeable at a store of soft goods. Tuscan and Dunstables are the great staple. Wanted: A lad to go West in the boot-polishing line. If handy, he will have chances of getting on. Wanted: Several plasterers at houses now rapidly going up. Apply, &c.—*Newspaper paragraph*.

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